

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 NSCE-00 AID-01
SSO-00 /023 W

-----114044 210959Z /10

O 210949Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3220

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 22361

FOR H

PLEASE PASS TO CONGRESSMAN BONKER'S OFFICE FOR THE
ATTENTION OF ALAN VAN EGMOND

CODEL TSONGAS/BONKER

(E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP (TSONGAS, PAUL AND BONKER, DON)

SUBJECT: CODEL TSONGAS/BONKER

1. CONGRESSMAN BONKER HAS REQUESTED THAT YOU EDIT AND
DISTRIBUTE THE FOLLOWING TO NEWS WEEKLIES, N.Y. TIMES,
WASHINGTON POST, WALL STREET JOURNAL AND CHRISTIAN SCIENCE
MONITOR.

2. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT A REIGN OF TERRORISM EXISTS
IN ADDIS TODAY. IT IS WIDESPREAD AND AFFECTS EVERYONE IN
THE COUNTRY. A CLOUD OF FEAR AND SUSPICION PERMEATES THE
CITY OF ADDIS AND EVEN NON-ETHIOPIANS ARE AFRAID TO OPENLY
DISCUSS IT.

3. WE KNEW OF THE TERROR AND KILLINGS BEFORE OUR ARRIVAL;
OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH EMBASSY PERSONNEL AND OTHERS
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REINFORCED IT. VIOLENCE HAD BECOME A WAY OF LIFE FOR
ETHIOPIANS.

4. BUT IT WAS NOT UNTIL WE WERE INTERRUPTED AT BREAKFAST
OUR LAST DAY THAT THE MESSAGE WAS BROUGHT DRAMATICALLY TO
US. WHILE NIGHTLY KILLINGS WERE COMMONPLACE IT APPEARED
THAT THE LAST EVENING WAS EXCEPTIONALLY BAD. WE IM-

MEDIATELY DEPARTED IN AN EMBASSY VEHICLE FOR A FIRSTHAND TOUR OF THE CITY. WHAT WE FOUND WAS SHOCKING. AT THE FIRST LOCATION, ACROSS THE STREET FROM WHERE U.S. EMBASSY PERSONNEL WERE LIVING, THERE WERE TWO ETHIOPIANS, BOUND BY THE HANDS, WHO WERE DEAD. AT ANOTHER STOP WE FOUND THREE WHO WERE SHOT IN AN ALLEY. FINALLY, IN ONE CONSPICUOUS LOCATION, WE DISCOVERED FOUR DEAD MEN WHO WERE PLACED DELIBERATELY FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY.

5. THE KILLINGS IN THEMSELVES WERE BAD ENOUGH, BUT THE FACT THEY WERE INTENTIONALLY LEFT IN OPEN AND CROWDED LOCATIONS FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION WAS ABHORRENT. THIS APPARENTLY WAS UNUSUAL AND INDICATED THE GOVERNMENT FULLY INTENDED TO ENGENDER FEAR IN THE POPULACE. IT SUCCEEDED IN THAT. SOME OF THE BODIES WERE BOUND BY THE HANDS, OTHERS HAD SIGNS ATTACHED IDENTIFYING THE VICTIMS AS "COUNTERREVOLUTIONARIES". BUT REASONS FOR THE MURDERS VARY AND THERE IS NO OPPORTUNITY FOR EXPLANATIONS. IT IS A CLOSED MATTER.

6. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE ATROCITIES IS NEVER EASY TO DETERMINE, BUT THE GOVERNMENT'S INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT IS UNDISPUTED.

7. IN ORDER TO INSURE GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL AFFAIRS, THE ETHIOPIAN PROVISIONAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT
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(EPMB) ESTABLISHED THE URBAN DWELLERS ASSOCIATION, KNOWN AS "KEBELE", TO ELECT THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND PROVIDE LOCAL INDOCTRINATION. IN ADDIS THERE ARE 290 LOCAL KEBELE UNITS, WHICH IN TURN SELECT REPRESENTATIVES TO 20 HIGHER UNITS AND, ULTIMATELY, THIS COMPRISES THE CITY GOVERNMENT.

8. THE SO-CALLED COUNTERREVOLUTIONARIES, KNOWN AS THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLES REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (EPRP) AND ARE CONSIDERED GENERALLY MORE DOCTRINAIRE MARXISTS, BEGAN SELECTIVE ASSASSINATIONS OF KEBELE LEADERS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. NEARLY ONE-FIFTH OF THESE LEADERS WERE ELIMINATED. WHAT HAS FOLLOWED CAN BE DESCRIBED AS A GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED PROGRAM OF DESTROYING THE EPRP AND ITS MEMBERS THROUGH WHOLESALE KILLINGS AND INFLECTING FEAR AMONG THE PEOPLE.

9. IN MARCH 1977, THE KEBELES SET UP THE REVOLUTIONARY DEFENSE SQUAD WHICH IS TO PATROL ALL OF THE 290 KEBELE UNITS, WITH LOCAL CITIZENS ASSIGNED AND ARMED TO PROTECT THE REVOLUTIONARIES. MOST OF THESE "PATROL SECURITY OFFICERS" ARE UNEDUCATED AND UNDISCIPLINED, BUT THEY HAVE LICENSE TO KILL ANYONE WHO IS SUSPECTED OF COUNTER-

REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES. ANYONE ACCUSED OF AN ASSORTMENT OF UNSPECIFIED CRIMES (EXAMPLE: HAVING U.S. CURRENCY ON PERSON) CAN BE SUMMARILY SHOT. INDEED, IN OUR MEETING WITH COL. MENGISTU HE CONFIRMED THIS BY SAYING THAT SUCH MEASURES WERE SOMETIMES TAKEN "ON THE SPOT".

10. THE KEBELE DEFENSE SQUAD IS IN ADDITION TO THE MILITARY WHICH CONDUCTS RAIDS AND EXECUTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE AND WITH A VICIOUSNESS THAT WOULD RIVAL IDI AMIN'S STATE RESEARCH BUREAU.

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INFO OCT-01 AF-04 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 NSCE-00 AID-01
SSO-00 /023 W

-----114062 211002Z /10

O 210949Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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11. COL. MENGISTU AND HIS HENCHMEN DISMISS ALL OF THIS AS PART OF THE REVOLUTION. IN FACT, THEY TAKE SATISFACTION IN COMPARING THEIR "REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE" TO THE RUSSIANS AND EVEN THE FRENCH DURING SIMILAR PERIODS. THEY REFER TO THE COUNTERREVOLUTIONARIES AS THE "WHITES", DRAWING ON THE OBVIOUS ANALOGY TO 1917 STRUGGLE IN POST-CZARIST RUSSIA.

12. WHILE THE AVERAGE ETHIOPIAN IS UNDERSTANDABLY AFRAID, HE IS NOT BUYING THE MARXIST THEORY OR ITS TECHNIQUES. NO ONE SERIOUSLY IDENTIFIES WITH THE "REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE" AND RESENTS, IF NOT TOTALLY REJECTS, THE RUSSIAN PATH TO SOCIAL JUSTICE. NO ONE CAN PREDICT JUST HOW LONG

THE TERRORISM WILL GO ON OR THE UNCERTAIN FUTURE OF THE
DIRG. MOST FEEL THE WESTERN INFLUENCE IS SO DEEPLY-ROOTED
IN ETHIOPIA THAT COMMUNISM WILL NOT SUCCEED, REGARDLESS
OF HOW HARD ITS PRESENT LEADERS TRY. IN
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"REVOLUTIONARY SQUARE" THERE HANG LARGE PHOTOS OF MARX,
LENIN, AND ENGELS, BUT THEY HAVE BEEN RIDDLED WITH
BULLETS. LAST MONTH, THE NUMBER TWO MAN IN THE DIRG WAS
EXECUTED BY COL. MENGISTU FOR FAVORING ETHIOPIAN NATIONAL-
ISM OVER RUSSIAN-SPONSORED COMMUNISM. ETHIOPIANS ARE TOO
PROUD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DISSOLUTION OF THEIR OWN
NATIONAL CHARACTER.

13. FOR ADDIS ABABA: FOREGOING IS FYI ONLY. EILTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Line Count: 189
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 162297
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL TSONGAS/BONKER
TAGS: OREP, (BONKER, DON), (TSONGAS, PAUL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/813416ff-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009